

## About the St. Jones Reserve

The St Jones Reserve features tidal brackish-water and salt marshes dominated by saltmarsh cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*), salt hay (*Spartina patens*) and open water of creek, river and bay areas, buffered by freshwater wooded fringe, farmlands and meadows. (Photo by: Eric Crossan)

The St. Jones River watershed drains a portion of the coastal plain in central Kent County, DE, including the city of Dover, the surrounding suburbs, industrial areas, agricultural areas and Dover Air Force Base. The upper St. Jones is impounded by a dam 10.5 miles upstream from the bay to form Silver Lake, a municipal recreation area. Some other headwater streams are also impounded. Much of the eastern portion (bayward) of the watershed consists of wetlands and forests, including lands and waters managed for waterfowl, wild turkey, deer and other wildlife.

The St. Jones Reserve is about 1518 hectares (3750 acres) in designated size, distributed along 8.8 km (5.5 mi) of medium-salinity tidal river situated at the lower end of the St. Jones River watershed, with the river discharging into mid-Delaware Bay.

The St. Jones Reserve contains 35 parcels of land held by private land-owners, plus the DNERR and one other state agency. Within the St. Jones Reserve's designated boundaries, about 282.8 hectares (698.5 acres) of tidal marshes, upland fields, woodlots, and croplands were purchased or protected by the DNERR in 1991-92 [with 174.7 ha (431.3 ac) purchased through fee-simple acquisition, and 108.1 ha (267.2 ac) protected through conservation easement], but the remaining majority of the Reserve is still in private ownership.

Adjacent to the St. Jones Reserve on its eastern side is the Ted Harvey Conservation Area, owned and managed by DNREC's [Division of Fish and Wildlife](#), consisting of 817 ha (2019 ac) of woodlands, upland fields, croplands, freshwater ponds and wetlands, coastal wetland impoundments, and Delaware Bay shoreline. While the Ted Harvey Conservation Area is not within the DNERR's designated boundaries, it is nonetheless available through cooperative arrangements with the Division of Fish and Wildlife for use in DNERR research and educational activities.

The Division of Fish and Wildlife's Roberts Tract, a 71.2 ha (176 ac) parcel of the Little Creek State Wildlife Area, borders the St. Jones Reserve at its western end; in conjunction with the Division's Ted Harvey Conservation Area, the Roberts Tract provides conservation-oriented land ownership on both upstream and downstream ends of the St. Jones Reserve.

The [John Dickinson Plantation and Mansion](#), owned and managed by the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, provides another 106.4 ha (262.8 ac) of protected area within the Reserve's designated boundaries, adjacent to the DNERR property's western border.

A small-boat ramp and fishing pier at Scotton Landing, owned and managed by the Division of Fish and Wildlife, provides good boat and water access to the main channel of the St. Jones River towards the Reserve's western end.

On its far eastern end, the St. Jones Reserve also contains about 1036 ha (2560 ac) of Delaware Bay bottom and nearshore waters, running for 3.2 km (2.0 mi) along the Ted Harvey Conservation Area's bay shoreline and extending outward 3.2 km (2.0 mi) into the open bay.

The St. Jones River watershed has significant development in upstream non-tidal areas, where urbanized Dover (Delaware's state capital) dominates the middle and upper watershed. However, downstream portions of the St. Jones River watershed, where the St. Jones Reserve is located, are still primarily agricultural, with the Dover Air Force Base nearby.